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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 CONAKRY 000506

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SUBJECT: FORCES VIVES REPORTEDLY UNITED AGAINST DADIS

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Classified By: A/DCM SHANNON CAZEAU FOR REASON 1.4 B AND D

11. (C) SUMMARY. According to political leader Francois Fall, Guinea's Forces Vives are determined to prevent CNDD President Moussa Dadis Camara from running in the upcoming presidential elections. Coalition members are reportedly discussing strategies for next steps while the country's youth are becoming increasingly agitated. Fall was pleased with the USG's August 20 press release (reftel) and hopeful that the International Contact Group will be able to send an equally strong message during its September 3-4 visit. Fall was convinced that it is still possible to change Dadis' mind and get him to back down from what many see as a decision that will lead to chaos. END SUMMARY.

12. (C) On August 26, A/DCM met with former prime minister turned political leader Francois Louceny Fall. He had been in touch with the Embassy over the weekend as Les Forces Vives worked to draft its declaration responding to the GoG's August 22 reaction to the USG's August 20 press release (reftel). The Forces Vives' declaration unequivocally emphasized the coalition's opposition to CNDD President Moussa Dadis Camara as a possible presidential candidate.

BIO NOTES

13. (SBU) Fall returned to Guinea shortly after the December 2008 coup d'etat, launching his own political party (FUDEC) several weeks later. Since his return, Fall has been a core member of Les Forces Vives. He has also been working hard to build up his party and even published a book outlining his vision for Guinea. Fall has a distinguished diplomatic career including postings in Paris, New York, Lagos, and Cairo. From 2000 to 2002, Fall was Guinea's Permanent Representative to the United Nations. Following this assignment, he was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs, a position he held for two years before being appointed Prime Minister. However, Fall only held the PM position for two months before he submitted his resignation. He reportedly claimed that the late President Conte was blocking his reform program. Fall is a Malinke from Kankan.

FORCES VIVES UNITED AGAINST DADIS

14. (C) According to Fall, members of Les Forces Vives are completely united as to the content of their declaration, negating rumors of dissension within the ranks. He emphasized that all major political leaders were present during the drafting, with the exception of UPR leader Ousmane Bah (who was not available), and all agreed to both the content and the force of the message. "Even Jean-Marie Dore

(UPR) agreed," Fall said, referring to Dore's growing reputation as a go-between for Dadis.

15. (C) Fall told A/DCM: "It is absolutely clear to us that Dadis plans to run for office and it is equally clear that we are opposed to this idea." He commented that any election with Dadis as a candidate would lack transparency and credibility. Fall noted that most of the country's local government authorities (prefects and governors) are military personnel, many of whom are actively promoting Dadis, and cannot be counted upon to fairly administer the election if continued military power is a possibility. In addition, Fall said that the CNDD is using state funds to buy political support.

16. (C) Describing Les Forces Vives' relationship with Dadis as a "partnership," Fall said the coalition had only initially agreed to work with Dadis and accept a transition plan because Dadis had assured them that the CNDD had no interest in maintaining power, and as such, would not run for office. "That partnership has now been broken and we are under no further obligation," Fall said.

STRATEGIES TO RAMP UP POLITICAL PRESSURE

17. (C) Arguing that Les Forces Vives needs to ramp up political pressure, Fall explained that he plans to announce a political alliance with the UFC party (Union of Forces for Change), which is headed by Aboubacar Syllah. According to Fall, Forces Vives members need to more actively promote a

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united front by declaring political alliances, thereby demonstrating unity across ethnic lines while disabusing Dadis of the notion that he can manipulate individuals against each other. Within the framework of this new political alliance, Fall said he plans to work with Syllah to launch a media campaign calling for the CNDD to step down.

18. (C) On the question of ethnicity, Fall said that Dadis is personally trying to recruit as many young Forestiers (Forest tribes) as possible in order to bolster his own support. At the same time, Guinea's political parties are notoriously ethnocentric, which feeds into Dadis' strategy of playing different groups off of each other. "This is why a clear political block is so important right now...we need to put together an alliance that can bring people together and ultimately win an election," Fall said. He emphasized that Syllah is of Soussou and Peuhl descent while he himself is Malinke. "We hope to bring at least one more party into the alliance so as to broaden the support base," Fall added.

YOUTH ARE RILED UP, BUT UNPREDICTABLE

19. (C) When A/DCM inquired about what Guinea's youth are up to, Fall said that they "are absolutely ready to move." He confirmed that they are actively organizing themselves, but could not say when they might "attack." Fall expressed support for the youth, but said it would be better if the entire population could mount a movement against Dadis, so he hoped they would wait a few more days to see what develops out of the International Contact Group (ICG) meeting scheduled for September 3-4. Fall stressed that if Dadis announces his candidacy, the international community should expect an immediate and likely violent reaction from the youths.

110. (C) In response to a question about reactions in the interior, Fall said he had recently returned from an eight-day trip to several towns throughout Upper Guinea, including Kankan. "The perception there is very simple - they do not support Dadis and they know he is using money to

try and buy their support," Fall said. He added that the Prefect of Siguiri, a military officer, had refused to let him enter the town to conduct political activity.

LOOKING TO THE INTERNATIONAL CONTACT GROUP

¶11. (C) Fall expressed his appreciation of the USG's August 20 press statement and continued commitment to the democratic process. He said that everyone is essentially waiting for the ICG to see how the rest of the international community reacts, and how Dadis reacts. Fall said that it is extremely important for the ICG to send a strong message, on par with that of the USG's.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE

¶12. (C) According to Fall, it is still possible for Dadis to change his mind. "Between you and I, I really doubt his mental stability," Fall said. Later, he commented that Dadis is not former President Lansana Conte. "He (Dadis) is scared and if we can convince him that this whole thing is a bad idea, he will back down," Fall said.

¶13. (C) Fall emphasized that the most important task ahead is ensuring a successful transition to civilian rule. "I am not necessarily looking to be president myself," he said, adding that what is needed is a strong leader and "if we can find someone to lead this transition, I will happily support him." For Fall, the most important objective is to provide a framework within which Guinea can start to move forward democratically.

¶14. (C) As the meeting came to a close, Fall said that there are three immediate risks posed by Guinea's current political situation. First, there is a strong possibility that the military will react to any mass demonstrations with excessive force. Second, Fall said it is clear that Dadis will "use weapons to win the election." Last, Fall said that if Dadis were to win the election, Guinea would be faced with "perpetual political instability."

COMMENT

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¶15. (C) Within the Forces Vives, Fall has been a strong voice among those pushing for a quick transition. Despite his assurances to the contrary, there is still likely some dissension within the coalition, but Dadis' increasingly clear intentions with respect to relinquishing power may be the catalyst that ultimately fosters much needed unity among socio-political actors. Dadis' reaction to the USG's press statement has ratcheted up political tensions. Many people seem to be focused on the ICG visit as a critical indicator of which way things are likely to go. END COMMENT.
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